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HOPE FOR THE FEMALE

Not being a poet or even a philosopher I am confining my remarks to a discussion of the male as distinct from the female portion of mankind. But I address myself chiefly to women, who, after all, are cruelly bored by politics and sport. For it is within a university that one is struck by the prevalence of women ignorant of certain elementary knowledge familiar to the average housewife: women, who, to judge from their exam results, intend to compete with men in the shabby business of earning a living.

Strange delusion, when marriage expressly rescues them from this insupportable bondage! Is militant feminism responsible for deluding women into thinking that they are EQUAL to men? At first this appears as fantastic as the notion of Einstein referring to his fingers to solve a mathematical problem; or of Professor Anderson seeking clarification on a metaphysical point from a street-corner preacher; or Shakespeare claiming that his language is equal in range, beauty and wit to the editorial in a morning paper. Comparison, in each case, is palpably absurd. Man, as any woman would tell you (were she so foolish as to define the subject), is simply a biologically convenient robot, of dubious mechanical reliability, employed by woman for continued experimentation in reproducing this cosmic freak known as human life. What tickles the humourist in womankind are the illusions these quaint apes entertain about their presence—and these illusions are here the object of my idle scrutiny.

Vanity is the greatest of these. Even more than Stupidity, Vanity—pure vanity—betokens man as fleas betoken a dog. And in contrast to a woman's, this vanity has no goal or teleology; a woman preens herself before a mirror with a marked victim in view, an objective; a man gazes lovingly at his reflection and exalts in a travesty

of the old adage, "Art for art's sake."

Of his sexual prowess a man will boast prodigiously, hint salaciously at un-numbered conquests and yet avoid accurate figures to spare his blushes. The Kinsey Report is a monument to the weakness of mankind for telling lies even under the anonymity of statistics. On the other hand a woman stresses her innocence or confesses tearfully that once (and only once) was that fall from grace. A husband believes his job is important even if it is perpetrating officialese, or mouthing mush to morons, or administering enemas; his wife deprecates housework and affects to despise it, thus ensuring that the easiest cop of all is her monopoly.

But Stupidity follows hard upon Vanity: the two are indivisible like Roland and Oliver. It bolsters vanity which in turn fosters the blessed blanket of innocence that protects the average man from the awful indignity of the realisation of his own pathetic status. Civilization itself (a one word joke) is erected on the externalizing of this stupidity. He believes that something Significant has been, or is being, achieved; that words like Empire, Righteousness, Democracy, Progress, Art and the Cause are solid realities; whereas he dismisses the cunning (usually called maternal) smiles on his womenfolk as

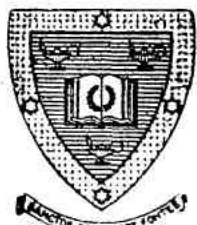
ephemeral, if indeed he notices them at all. The truth is, of course, that these smiles represent the sum total of all that needs to be said on the history of mankind.

Religion, or organised optimism, is a curiously masculine exuberance. It derives the sex of its deity (whether in India, Israel or Inca-land) from the male even as its prophet was made. Life, so goes the cheerful news, is not a tale told by an idiot (as a well-known cynic alleged) but merely a prelude to the Real Thing which goes on and on and on for donkey's years. No wonder self-slaughter accounts for 38 men to each one woman. No wonder men affect courage they do not possess, and join the army and shoot tigers. In fact the ordinary man, as any backyard matriarch will tell you, would drop dead with fright if he found he was to produce unwanted evidence in the form of a Third Party as a result of his oafish carnality.

Then, take politics . . . ah, yes . . . quite so. We have established indisputably the fact of male imbecility so let us now consider another facet: his mammoth and indescribable innocence.

Women, above the age of three and rarely then, are never innocent. But men . . . do they ever QUITE lose its bloom? Think of the face of the bridegroom at the last wedding you muscled into. Was it not the unconscious look of an elderly, slightly dazed sheep in the mustering pen at the abattoirs. Again, I still number among my bar-room friends, men that blanch when a woman accidentally overhears a word "not in decent use" and they drop their eyes to the floor and become very confused indeed. Also, no woman is ever shockable unless it is expected of them, which is (though they mourn it) frequently. And

(Continued on page three)



W O R O N I

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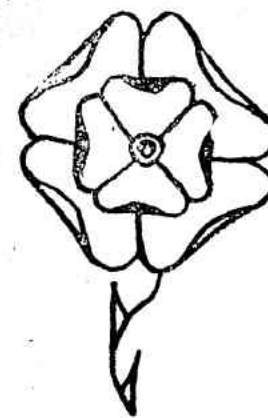
JUBILEE EDITORIAL

We, the editors of *Woroni*, representing the great Free Press of Australia, as every magazine, journal, news sheet and newspaper published in this fair land of ours does, take pleasure in saluting the Fifty Years of magnificent achievement that has resulted in our glorious Present—this flourishing, virile, bustling democracy: Australia Fair!

From Leeuin to Cape York, from Carpentaria to Port Davy millions of Australia's happy, free, tall, bronzed, rugged, hatchet-faced, keen-eyed sons glory and rejoice in this wide brown land of ours. From the twenty furthest corners of the kangaroo continent come messages of loyalty, brought by rangy athletes, astride their modern chargers, to this fair Temple of Democracy, this sceptred isle, this Demi-Paradise, this Inter-mammary pearl, this Canberra! Here, amidst scenes of unparalleled enthusiasm and splendour, with Our Glorious Sunshine bathing the beautiful avenues and gardens, the flower of Australian manhood passed in serried ranks, in splendid review before our Great Leader—flanked on either side by representatives of the countries of the world, here to pay homage to The Pacific Nation. Soaring over all rose the magnificent voice of Australia's Queen of Song, mingling with the silver wings of our gallant airmen, in a triumphant paean of praise to our Father. He Who has given us the immortal privilege of grasping in our hands His dirt, and from Whom the bounteous harvest of our prosperity has sprung, we beseech to guard us ever. It has been with God's help and by the courage, the foresight, the tenacity of our Founding Fathers, who raised that mighty edifice the Constitution, that we have now arrived into our place in the sun. It is now up to us, to our generation, to catch the Torch, thrown down the ages to us and to bear it proudly and unselfishly in the years to come, until we too are Called Home by the great Reaper and we can pass it on to our sons, confident that the Australian nation will ever move onward and upward to greater heights!

The other evening, while rooting for a trifling truffle of knowledge, a porcine acquaintance of mine observed this pearl to fall from a mentor's lips, "Pushkin had read many English authors—he had read Homer and Virgil and Horace . . ." Which would seem to make Gilbert Murray even older than we had suspected.

Another Don to come to our notice was the one who delivered the most honest debating speech we have heard. On being called upon to speak by the chairman, he announced, "I rise to my feet at your wish, but, having risen, I find I have nothing to say, and with your permission I shall sit down again."



Attar and Thorns

There is an unwonted air of excitement about in the Canberra University College's Hall of Residence for Men. Lizards that normally lounge late in bed have been seen rising early in the morning and looking expectantly out of windows. For there has arrived, and is laid in a neat pile awaiting erection, a flag-pole. How long, they wonder, before it points aloft and they can sing with Walt Whitman.

"O a new song, a free song,
Flapping, flapping, flapping, flap-
ping . . ."

In point of fact one doubts whether the authorities fully considered, before placing their order, the effects that their action is likely to engender. The danger of distraction from study is clearly foreseen by the poet:

"Words! Book-words! what are
you?"

Words no more, for hearken and
see,

My song is there in the open air,
and I must sing,

With the banner and pennant
a-flapping."

It can only be hoped that the grim picture of fixation which he prophetically paints will not be fulfilled.

"I see but you, O warlike pen-
nant! O banner so broad, with
stripes; I sing you only,
Flapping up there in the wind."

* * *

Congratulations to "Chesty"
Woolcott who has been selected
for the A.C.T. Aussie Rules team.
Have a good trip, Dick!

MORE LABOUR LOSSES

W. G. Higgs, Australia's First Fabian?

The Australian labour movement is fast losing its grand old men. The veteran editor of the Sydney "Worker," Mr. H. E. Boote, died not two years ago, and last week, almost unnoticed in the shock caused by the passing of Mr. Chifley, the death occurred of another former Commonwealth Treasurer, and Labour editor, Mr. W. G. Higgs.

What did these giants of the past contribute to our society in their prime, and what did they think of the political party which has developed out of the work of their hands?

Shortly before the 1949 elections Mr. Higgs remarked: "I've been through the mill, and Socialism won't work, for who's going to be the boss?" Was this a desertion of principle by a man who in his youth had watched a march of unemployed men carrying a sign: "Bread or blood"?

It was not. Mr. Chifley said not long ago that he regarded the Labour Movement as a religion, just as the German Social-Democratic Bernstein had once insisted that to him the movement meant everything and the ultimate aim nothing. If this is Socialism, it is not the socialist tiger of the conservative electioneer. It was this nightmare of the hustings which Higgs believed unworkable except in the form of a dictatorship.

Many years ago, when editor of *The Worker* in Queensland—the State which produced Andrew Fisher, in whose Cabinet he later served—Higgs popularised the memorable slogan, "Socialism in our time." He had heard a contemporary remark that men were governed by phrases, and proceeded to put this idea to the test.

What was the content of Higgs' socialism? "As much state co-operation and municipal co-operation as we can get in our day and generation. If you do not agree with *The Worker's* method of advocacy, ask yourself what you are doing to bring about reform legislation." This was the crux of the matter. For the man who could remember "Billy" Lane talking for two hours in an attempt to persuade him to join the Paraguay expedition, could also remember the long discussions with Sidney and Beat-

rice Webb when they visited Australia, and the advice of Sir George Grey to drop all other agitation and concentrate on "One Man One Vote."

Higgs' perception of the value of the Gas and Water Socialism of the early Fabians, highlights the acuteness of his intellect in divining the secret of democratic working-class leadership, a secret which even Lenin, brilliant as he was, failed to discover after a lifetime of riotous polemics. That secret lies in getting things done, particularly those things affecting directly the life of everyman. Another Queenslander, W. G. Spence, was also aware of this—that if the working-class leader wanted to assure himself of the active support of his followers, he must act as well as talk.

If this was Socialism, then we must remember that Higgs thought the worth of Karl Marx to lie in a supposed advocacy of "State Co-operation." He forsook Marx for the Webbs, however, in his realisation that if the state was an organ of capitalist society, it could be caused to serve other interests by a replacement of the existing public servants by popular appointees. In that event, the people *could* rule in a co-operative community which got for them practical results and, through a reduction of working hours and increased amenities, gave the workers "more opportunity of educating themselves socially."

The visiting French scholar, Albert Metin, described Higgs' socialism as "sentimental and even religious; that of a trade unionist—very peaceable." Indeed, in his later years, Higgs came to embrace religion. And the

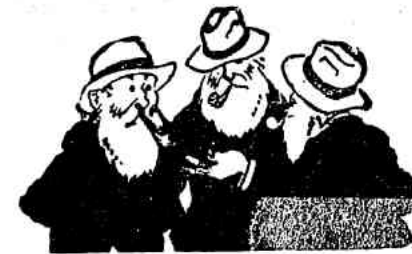
humanitarian nature of his socialism is well illustrated by his devoting his last energies to an unremitting campaign for the betterment of conditions in mental institutions.

Higgs was indeed a socialist. But his socialism, like that of other founders of the Australian Labour Movement, was an active humanitarian religion, and not a soulless mechanism such as that envisaged by a prominent labour man of 1950 who recently declared that. "The *ultimate* aim of the trade union movement must be the control by a Commonwealth authority of all aspects of the national economy."

The giants of the early labour movement were remarkable men. As amateur sociologists they are able to teach today's professionals many points, and in the breadth of their vision, these men, self-taught in a hard school, are able to put many modern politicians to shame.

It is fitting that some tribute should be paid to one of these men who, in his old age as in his youth, threw his inspiring personality into the fight for the welfare of his fellow men.

P. HILL.



THE MALE—(from page one)

who does not know the familiar "wolf" the bragger, the gauche quack who gobbles up the fearful bilge in women's magazines about masculine superiority, etc.? And then regurgitates it all as if it were demonstrable in his own asinine struttings.

It is manifestly clear from all this that I myself am a mere man and that to women readers I have only flogged the preternaturally obvious. The men, I trust, will smile broadly as if I were joking. For all of which I apologise from the bottom of my heart and were I not stupid, vain and guileless, I would say "humbly."

NEILL C. HOPE.

BRITTEN HAS DONNE IT AGAIN

"This young spark is good company for as long as his persiflage remains fresh, which is not long. One hopes earnestly that he is aware of the nature of his phase—a kind of programme-music phase of which the programme is 'See how knowing I am, how much wiser than my years'."

Well, this was written in the Musical Times in 1934 and I don't think Benjamin Britten has "learnt his lesson." I do think, however, that he has suffered little from his laxness. Perhaps he is saying, "See how knowing I am, etc.," but he certainly has not lost his freshness mainly because his work is continually being rejuvenated by a new and highly dexterous experiment.

Several weeks ago the A.B.C. broadcast the 4th Edinburgh Festival of music featuring Benjamin Britten and tenor Peter Pears and including in the programme Britten's own arrangement of several of John Donne's Holy Sonnets. The whole was a brilliant interpretation of that poet's most inspired verse.

Unfortunately I did not have a copy of the sonnets on hand at the time of the broadcast and therefore can only speak of the performance with generalities except in the case of one or two which I had known previously. The overall spirit captured and presented by Britten is one of intense anguish. And rightly so! How he did love the thundering drama of those opening lines: "Batter my heart, three person'd God;" and "At the round earth's imagin'd corners, blow your trumpets, Angells." It was but a matter of time before Britten should exploit his talent as a dramatist on these poems which are among the most dramatic in our literature.

The passion of these poems is complete and uninhibited and Britten with the combination of tenor and pianist has captured it all. Characteristically he has made the two inseparable. As in his "Foggy Foggy Dew," where the

archie in canberra

still in canberra boss
having an instructive
if not an enjoyable
time
mehitabel is living
in a pigeon-hole at a department
which she calls external affaires
they are not ordinary public servants
she tells me but
refined and cultured
and she is very happy there
mainly i think because
she is friendly with a tomcat
who once had the honour
to be patted by a
diplomatic cadet
me i am with the proletariat
in one of the cheaper hostels
say boss hostel life
is swell for us cockroaches
perhaps not for human beings
in which category
would you put
public servants
question mark
love

archy

wendy shaw

with apologies to and inspiration from don maquis

accompaniment though insufficient in itself, is an integral part of the performance, so is it with the Donne sonnets with a vengeance. This is a work in which the piano is perhaps the principal medium and the contrasts, the resounding chords and even the moments when the piano is not heard achieve a compelling effect cunningly contrived by the composer-pianist. The piano, however, could not stand alone. It is a work for tenor and piano not for soloist and accompanist. Donne's impassioned pleas for salvation and his ever mounting terror when contemplating death are captured with perfection by the powerful chords of the piano and the dramatic voice of Peter Pears together.

The performance ended with the famous "Death be not proud" sonnet and the picture of a lost poet changes to a triumphant one with some of Britten's most beautiful harmonies. "Thou art slave to Fate, Chance, kings and desperate men," said Donne and Peter Pears, left without accom-

paniment captured the triumph of these lines admirably.

Yes, a young spark, indeed, but who's going to play his settings after he is dead?

SCOTT CAMPBELL.

Students' Association

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For Table Reservations 'Phone the President of the S.R.C. at 895 or Miss E. Courtney at B598.

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TRUMAN'S TOOL SHED

The University College Political Science Club held its second meeting for the year on Monday, 2nd June. An overwhelming attendance of 17 members (nearly half from the staff and including the six speakers) was entertained and/or edified by a learned debate on the subject "The United Nations is an Instrument of United States Imperialism."

Mr. Brooks opened the debate for the Government by careful definition of the subject. He then proceeded to use the rest of his time outlining the methods by which the U.S. has developed its influence in the Security Council and the General Assembly, and showed by examples how it has gained its own ends in nearly every dispute it has taken up. He said, too, that the smaller U.N. organs were not here under discussion, only the main political body.

This point was taken by Mr. Webster for the Opposition. He was the outstanding speaker for the evening, his rhetorical eloquence leaving the audience (or part of same) dumb. His first point was that it was the smaller agencies of U.N., which act, not talk, that are the real U.N. Assuming, however, that the Council and the Assembly are the United Nations, and that the U.S. is a sinister power aiming at world domination, why does it use the open forum to carry out its sinister designs? And if any nation is trying to use the U.N. for its own ends, are not all nations trying to do so? The United States is just a scapegoat. If, in fact, there is a

AN ATTAR AND ATHORN

Paeans of praise to Geoffrey Petit who represents the A.C.T. in the R.U. team to play the All Blacks.

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bogeyman in U.N., is it not Russia? He summed up by saying (1) U.N. is the solid work done by the smaller agencies; (2) U.N. is a positive hindrance to any imperialism. If it has failed, it is the fault of U.N. as a whole, not only the U.S.; (3) If the blame for Imperialism lies anywhere it is not with the U.S. but the U.S.S.R.

Before the debate, Mr. Woolcott, second speaker for the Government, told me *confidentially* that he had prepared nothing. If this was true I admire his ability. In a rather conversational manner he told of the swing from British Imperialism of the 19th Century to U.S. Imperialism of the 20th Century. He discussed U.S. foreign policy, describing how it all hinged on the American male's attitude to the opposite sex. In conclusion he told us how the U.S. had manipulated U.N. to suit itself.

Mr. Bowden for the Opposition described the work of the various agencies of the U.N. He told us that it was not until the U.S.S.R. had been rearming for some time that the U.S. made any moves that might be called imperialistic—the Atlantic Pact, etc. Further he described efforts by the U.S. to control atomic power. Any members of the audience who were at all bored by this stage of the debate were jolted into consciousness by his concluding remarks—delivered in most eloquent French.

I think it is very pleasant to know that the third speaker for the Government, Mr. Morrison, is on such good terms with the rest of the world. He chatted informally about "Dear old Percy Spender," "Dear old India," "The good old Golden Gate," and "Dear Old Joe." He pointed out that friend Joe was not able to gain much support in the U.S.-dominated U.N. and quoted voting

figures to support this. Then he pointed out that the smaller organs of U.N. were mainly in the form of U.S. mass charity.

Mr. Henderson denied that the support for the U.S. in the Assembly was bad—it showed the free feeling of the rest of the world. Mass charity was not the aim of U.S. aid, it was to save lives. He pressed the point of U.S. disarmament and showed the audience that the four main points of the U.N. Charter were not to be gained by Russia but by the whole of U.N. aided by the U.S. He offered us the alternatives of the disinterested help of a big nation (U.S.) or being bound hand and foot by Russia.

The replies from the floor of the house were non-existent, except one by Mr. Beddie, who talked about the original Charter, and by the Chairman, Professor Crisp, who replied. He said imperialism had been at work from the first and quoted the U.S. attitude by regaling us with various slogans he had noticed while in the U.S.

The standard of the debate was not very high but it was amusing throughout. The winning team was decided by voting but I am not sure which way!

Future meetings of the Political Science Club are to consist of:—

1. A talk by Mr. Webb from the National University on "Trade Unions in the State."—with special reference to N.Z. and Australia.
2. A statistical analysis of the last Federal elections.

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"To do or die, Australians cry,
The Empire defending, Australian
lads we're sending;
We'll bust up the works of the
watch on the Rhine,
And pinch all the washing off the
Siegfried Line;
We will not fight to show our
might,
But just because we know we're
right."

Thus ran the war-cry of 1939. The sentiment was not greatly different from the burst of patriotic enthusiasm of August, 1914, when the late C. J. Dennis' "Fellers of Australier, Blokes an' coves an' coots . . ." was greeted with profane enthusiasm. Since 1914 we have, unhappily, had adequate opportunity to consider the utility of the flag-flapping in wartime. Does the current recruiting campaign reflect the results of this experience?

Early in the Korean campaign (and even now in the pronouncements of the Director-General of Recruiting) one finds the old clichés breaking through: "The reputation of your country lies in your hands; it's up to you to show the world the valour and unconquerable spirit of the British race." Men volunteering for the Korea force followed suit: "I want to keep the freedom we have here"; "I don't like communists and we've got to stop them."

But there is one story which did not appear in the newspapers. As the lines of men weaved slowly towards the recruiting office doors a message passed back from mouth to mouth: "There's a flaming quiz inside; here's the drum. When he asks you why you're joining up, don't tell him you couldn't live with Mum, whatever you blanky well do." And yet a few unrehearsed comments slipped out: "I've had itchy feet ever since this war started"; "I want to be in this fight from the beginning"; "I want to be back with my mates."

Could it be that men do not join up for the orthodox reasons?

Whatever the proportion of naive patriots among the first volunteers, the initial influx of acceptable applicants rapidly fell away, so that by the end of September, after six weeks of recruiting, the Victorian quota of 270 men had not yet been filled. It was painfully apparent that in these years of grace, flag flapping has only a limited appeal.

On October 3rd the Prime Minister launched a full-scale advertising campaign in all Australian newspapers and magazines. It had two aspects, the first designed to appeal to the general public and the second to attract men to the armed services.

The "three great immediate tasks" were given a new and urgent emphasis, carrying the implication that to shirk them was treason, since "what we do now will shape Australia's fate and future." In the face of what was stated to be an imminent peril of invasion, an "all-in" effort was essential. The individual citizen was reminded that even he was important to the common welfare, while the sluggard (shades of Big Brother) was constantly asked whether he was a "good Australian."

The recruiting campaign, however, still could not shake itself free of the old methods, and in its early phases continued to glamorize the "self-respect" of a serviceman as the "vital factor" in the national destiny; the Australian *fighting* man, "in brawl or battle," was the salt of the earth; and the three services were the guardians of the true spirit of a personified Australia.

This phase died hard, but as the results continued to be unsatisfactory, there was a switch back to the unity theme: "Australia needs less division and more divisions." Finally there was a reluctant move towards security, surely an anachronism in any fighting force! But there it was in black and white: the permanent army is the "finest career of all." And on the other side of the record: "Your savings are as safe as Australia."

In *this* war, the first fine, free, careless rapture has been subjected to the process of rationali-

zation at a very early stage. There are perhaps two reasons.

Rohan Rivett's review of a recent novel, "No Music For Generals," remarked that brass-hats are often "actuated by motives never hinted at in . . . official war histories," and referred to the phenomenon which C. E. Montague once called "disenchantment." In fact, the Korean affair burst on a world still weary of war, and full of men remembering idols shattered by broken promises and by the advancement of those wise enough not to go to the wars. The only recruiting appeal that *could* work was one emphasizing the army as a career.

The second reason for rationalization stems from the inner necessities of modern warfare. As Goebbels put it in 1942: "Public and private life here has for a quarter of a century been geared solely to war. The success is enormous."

The day of the amateur soldier is over. Today one just can't afford to muddle through. It remains to be seen just what effect this has on certain of the more delicate aspects of democracy.

S.R.C. NEWS

Prometheus

Contributions are wanted for *Prometheus*. Unless they are forthcoming by the end of the third week in July, there will be no annual magazine this year.

We want:—

ARTICLES.

POEMS.

STORIES.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Please think hard and, we repeat, send your articles in to the S.R.C. room by the end of the third week in July.

The Revue

There will be no Revue this year; however, it has been decided that a Revue will be staged during Commencement Week next year and for this the S.R.C. still needs scripts. So send them in! It is mooted, also, that the Students' Association co-operate with the Canberra Repertory Society in a production of *1066 and all that*, which is to be put on early in third term. Of this more later.

CRICHTON SUPPORTS TRUMAN

In the "New York Times" Book Review for September, 1950, Alice S. Morris wrote of Truman Capote:

"The political, economic and social perplexities that darken civilization cast no shadows, or only incidental ones, in Mr. Capote's patchwork world. The bits and snatches he has pieced it out with are funny, sunny, sad, but never worrisome."

While this may be true of the book under review, "Local Colour," nothing could be more untrue of Capote's collection of short stories under the title of "A Tree of Night."

Certainly Capote does not write essentially as a critic of contemporary society, as indeed seems to be becoming fashionable these days, nor does he offer any political or social panacea for the ills of the times, but no writer is more expressive of the feelings and attitudes of the people of a generation shadowed by political and social perplexities.

It is probably too early to make any real evaluation of Capote's work, but we can say that it is of extraordinary interest, not only because of the attitude which it represents but because of the amazing, and I think, very real gift of expression which this young writer possesses.

This collection of stories is remarkable too for the distinct difference in the quality of the stories. Three of them stand out as first class pieces of work. These are "Master Misery," "Shut a Final Door," and "Children on their Birthdays." In direct contrast are "My Side of the Matter" and the title story, "A Tree of Night," which could be classified at best as "mediocre" and at the worst as "bad."

Capote excels most in his descriptions of relations between individuals. He is able by the most delicate shading to bring out the subtle nuances of a personal situation and can lay bare most cruelly and pitilessly the failure and disintegration of a human soul.

In "Shut a Final Door" he draws a merciless picture of the

blind strivings and frustrations of a young man who is without values or goal, and is completely despicable in every aspect of his personal life. The climax of the story is handled magnificently. The final peak of aimlessness has been reached, the final depth of humiliation, when he is driven to enjoy a chance liaison with a crippled woman: "Reeking with dime-store perfume, she came out of the bathroom wearing only a sleazy flesh-coloured kimono, and the monstrous black shoe. It was then that he realised that he could not go through with it. And he had never felt so sorry for himself: not even Anna Stimson would ever have forgiven him this."

From this the story moves swiftly to the overwhelming loneliness, terror and horror which really strikes through the everyday sounds in the surrounding apartments.

Even the part of the story re-

lating to Irving the Jewish boy, which is a hackneyed enough tale of the jilted lover, is lifted completely above the banal:

"He put down his whisky, slowly climbed off the stool, and, with a kind of sad ersatz toughness, strutted forward . . ."

In "Children on their Birthdays," Capote gives us a wonderful picture of the adult world of childhood and shows an amazing insight into the growing consciousness of adolescence. Again the concluding paragraphs of the story are superbly handled.

How is it then, one might ask, that Capote can be so completely commonplace and uninspired in some of his other stories, such as "My Side of the Matter" and "Jug of Silver"? I can only put forward the rather obvious suggestion that as a very young writer (he is only 25 now and has already published one travel book, one collection of short stories and one novel) he is still finding his feet. The difference in the quality of the stories indicates various stages in the development of mind as well as of craftsmanship.

Truman Capote is partial to the grotesque, misshapen and eccentric. Many of his stories have a curious misty quality about them and an atmosphere of lonely terror in the midst of crowds. His characters often seem to move in the half-light of a dream, never quite alive, yet often larger than life.

His imagery is vivid, unusual and strangely beautiful, and there is a lyrical quality about his prose. One of the best examples of both these aspects of his work is to be found in the story "The Headless Hawk."

"Nine pale little girls shrieked round a corner flower cart begging daisies to pin in their hair, but the pedlar said, "shoo!" and fleeing like beads of a broken bracelet, they circled in the street, the wild ones leaping with laughter, and the shy ones silent and isolated, lifting summer-wilted faces skyward: the rain, would it never come?"



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SOUND AND FURY

Dear Editor,

Well, well, so Wendy Shaw, whoever she may be, dissociates herself from the rest of mankind, detests the Korean war, and sees no hope for the human race. This is alarming news, or would be if Miss Shaw's article weren't such earnest nonsense. A few simple facts need to be pointed out. One is that we are not going to avoid the carnage described somewhat hysterically by Miss Shaw, by sitting back and thinking noble thoughts. It is in order that blood may not run in the streets of King's Cross, etc., that the United Nations (not just America) is fighting in Korea. Asian imperialism has got to be stopped, and as far from Australia as possible. It is all very well to be idealistic; but if we cannot put the whole world to rights, we can at least keep Australia a free and democratic country; and this we can only do by defeating Communism. Maybe we haven't any ethical right to suppress Asian nationalism; but we have a right to remain Australian.

Miss Shaw finishes her tirade by plugging the party line in an attack on America almost worthy of the *Tribune*. All right, Americans are loud-mouthed and jingoistic, but for all their "vicious and inhuman economic policy" they are keeping half the world from starvation, including Yugoslavia, which is as violently opposed to Capitalism as North Korea or Miss Shaw. America, moreover, saved us in the last war (let's face it) and will probably save us in the next.

And in spite of Miss Shaw's assertions, we don't love wars. We

engage in them to avoid greater evils. We engage in them as a more practical way of retaining our civilisation than writing hysterical articles lamenting the depravity of mankind.

REALIST.



Vivat Academia

Hands up, anyone that cares about the Academic Life. I thought so. You in the back row there, put your hand down; you're new to Canberra and don't know any better.

For some twenty years, now, people have been trying to stir up student feeling in Canberra. Of course, other Universities complain about Student Apathy too. They don't know what they're talking about. They haven't seen us.

Of course we have innumerable excuses. We rush from our office to lectures, and rush off again when the lecture is over, so as not to miss buses. We have no time to stand and stare. Even if we had the time, we haven't got a Quad to sit around in, or a coffee shop to waste beautiful hours of talk. Besides, we're only in this for what we can get out of it—aren't we? We're after degrees so we can be lordly Graduates and get more pay and be regarded with alternate awe and scorn by the rest of the Public Service. It's no use telling us that degrees don't matter, that universities aren't just degree shops, that the real effects of academic life show in the mind and character, not the pay envelope.

What do we want besides lectures and degrees? What do we care about Union Nights, literary groups, political clubs, dramatic clubs, protest meetings, demonstrations, university politics? We haven't time to talk. We're Public Servants, and we can't be interested in politics. We leave that stuff to the long-haired leisured classes of metropolitan universities.

It's rather a pity. Because we have some advantages that could be conducive to quite enthusiastic extra-curricular activities. Unlike a good many city students, we're not intermittently homeless and perpetually broke—we're all overpaid and very adequately accommodated. Canberra life, too, offers little distraction in the way of social and intellectual activity that might divide our interests. Maybe we haven't a John Anderson, but our professors and lecturers are by no means as lethargic as we are, and not unlikely to encourage any move to make this something like a real university.

But we couldn't care less. We'd rather lose our souls than miss a bus. We'd rather restrict our public protests to Hedge-line Deliveries and The Coast Road than imperil our chances of advancement in the Career Service. We're a sorry lot, aren't we?

WENDY SHAW.

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"WALK SOFTLY, STRANGER"—The "Third Man" team, Joseph Cotten and Valli reunited in exciting drama.